

Washington, DC - Vermont's Congressional Delegation - Sen. Patrick Leahy (D), Sen. Bernie Sanders (I), and Rep. Peter Welch (D) has asked the Nuclear Regulatory Commission for a thorough and complete investigation into the collapse of a portion of a cooling tower at Vermont Yankee. The text of the Delegation's letter to Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman Dale Klein is below:

August 23, 2007

The Honorable Dale Klein
Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Dear Chairman Klein:

We are writing in response to the alarming events that occurred at Vermont Yankee power plant on August 21, 2007. It is our understanding that a non-safety related portion of one cooling tower cell at the plant collapsed. We further understand from your staff at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) that there was no threat to the public's health with this accident and that the plant began to power down to 40% immediately following the accident.

We are concerned about the cause of this structural failure, especially about the implications for the cooling tower cell(s) that are related to the safe operation of the plant. We understand from your staff that the licensee, Entergy Vermont Yankee, is currently examining this accident to determine the cause of the collapsed tower and whether there was any evidence of structural deficiencies prior to the collapse. However, the NRC, has not yet committed to undertaking a thorough investigation of the safety related cooling towers cell(s) that are located on the same site and could potentially have similar structural issues. We find this extremely troubling.

We therefore request you undertake an immediate and thorough investigation to determine if there are similar structural deficiencies in any and all portions of the safety related cooling towers cell(s) at the facility. Furthermore, we ask you to examine the structural integrity of the

remaining towers and institute any additional precautions to prevent other collapses that would jeopardize the safety of the cooling towers and that could present a risk to the public's health or safe operation of the facility. Finally we request an evaluation of any preventive actions that the licensee and/or NRC took in the past related to the safe and efficient operation of all of the cooling towers at the facility.

Please continue to keep us thoroughly informed as more information becomes available. We are committed to assisting Vermont and the NRC to ensure the safety at Vermont Yankee. We appreciate your timely attention to this issue.

PATRICK LEAHY

BERNARD SANDERS

PETER WELCH

United States Senator
Representative

United States Senator

United States